



SOUTHEAST NEWS

January - February 2010

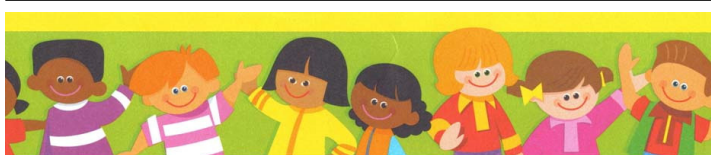
Southeast Elementary School, 134 Warrenville Rd., Mansfield Center, CT 06250 423-1611

Dear Southeast Families,

As the year comes to a close, it is delightful to reflect on all the wonderful happenings at Southeast School for 2009. I feel so fortunate to be a part of a community that works together to provide enrichment and support for all of our children. Thank you for being so enthusiastic and supportive.

Wishing you a wonderful holiday season and a new year filled with love, joy and happiness.

Fondly,
Norma Fisher-Doiron



Calling All Kindergarteners!

Once again it is time to schedule our Kindergarten Registration. We are asking your help in identifying all children who will be eligible to attend kindergarten for the 2010-2011 school year.

If you have a child or know of a child who will be five years old on or before January 1, 2011, please contact the school office at 423-1611. We are gathering all names and addresses in order to send out invitations to the activities necessary to register your child.

Please feel free to call the above telephone number with any questions you may have.



Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF

This year's contribution to UNICEF, from the children of Southeast School amounted to over \$335.00

We wish you and your loved ones a very Happy Holiday, and a safe and healthy New Year.



Calendar of Events

January

- Jan. 1..... New Year's Day - Winter Vacation
Jan. 4..... Trestle Tree starts
7:00 PTO Meeting
Jan. 18..... NO SCHOOL - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Jan. 19..... NO SCHOOL - Professional Development Day
Jan. 20..... 9:15-11:15 4th grade Ice Skating field trip
Jan. 21..... 7:30 Board of Education Meeting
Jan. 26..... 8:15 Schoolwide Enrichment Team Meeting
3:30-5:00 Green Thumbs Club
Jan. 28..... 7:30 Board of Education Meeting

February

- Feb. 1..... 7:00 PTO Meeting
Feb. 4..... 7:30 Board of Education Meeting
Feb. 11..... 7:30 Board of Education Meeting
Feb. 12..... Trestle Tree ends
Feb. 13 to 21..... NO SCHOOL - February Vacation
Feb. 23..... 8:15 Schoolwide Enrichment Team Meeting
3:30 Green Thumbs Club
Feb. 24..... Bus Idling Presentation by Ginny Walton, Julie Brown
12:15-12:30 Grades 1 & 2 in cafeteria
12:45-1:00 Grades 3 & 4 in cafeteria

For dates and times of Academies, Clubs and other after school activities, please log onto our website and check our calendar.

WINTER WEATHER, DELAYED OPENINGS, EMERGENCY EARLY CLOSINGS



During the winter months, the possibility exists for storms that would require the Superintendent to order a delayed opening or emergency early closing.

- If school is delayed by 90 minutes, school will start at 10:30 and students should arrive no earlier than 10:15. There is no before school child care available. AM PreK is cancelled.
- If we have an emergency early closing, grades K-4 will dismiss at 12:45. AM PreK will stay until 12:45. PM PreK is cancelled.

Just a reminder . . . be aware of delayed openings and early closings or cancellations by listening to the radio or TV and make arrangements for childcare.

For more information about delays and emergency early closings, please log on to our website.

Attendance Line/Nurse: 423-2793

Please visit our website www.mansfieldct.org/schools/southeast



The Giving Tree

Every year we put up an evergreen tree in the office for children to decorate with mittens, scarves and hats for local families in need. This year there was a constant parade of children and parents coming in to the office to hang items on the tree. What a wonderful response we had!

The items will be picked up by the Mansfield Youth Services Department for distribution.

The children really enjoyed seeing the tree fill up and knowing that they have helped keep someone else warm during these cold winter days.

Thank you so much for your community support.

Geno's Reading Team Pep Rally



The Connecticut Association of Schools is pleased to be part of the first ever "Women's College Game Day" Pep Rally at UCONN's Gampel Pavilion on **Saturday, January 16, 2010**. All of the CAS Elementary Schools who have registered with "Geno's Reading Team", along with their students, parents, family members, chaperones, teachers and administrators are welcome to attend the pep rally. Children need to be accompanied by an adult. Admission is free. **The event will be televised nationally by ESPN!** We won't be the only spectators in attendance as the entire UCONN student body along with hundreds of fans who follow the defending national champion UCONN Women's Basketball team will join in the festivities. Coach Auriemma, UCONN players, cheerleaders, pep band and mascot all will be there along with media personnel from several outlets.

What time?

Set your alarm clock early – the doors will open at 7:30 AM.

We want all the elementary students there by 8:15. *Our portion of the rally will be featured before the sponsors and ESPN take over the show at 9:00.* Several activities will commence shortly after 9:00, with the live TV show commencing at 10. The pep rally ends at 11:00AM.

Total Your Minutes Read

Be sure to add up the total minutes that you've read and remember that number for the pep rally! Geno might ask how many minutes you've read.

Transportation & Parking

Private cars can park free in the garage adjacent to Gampel or in any other lot. (UCONN is not in session on January 16th).

Dress & Spirit & Food

Wear your own school colors or UCONN colors. Bring along posters, signs and banners – the whole idea is to try and catch the TV camera! There will be tables set up to make signs if you need to. "Women's College Game Day" will be very spirited – lots of music, cheer, and fun –for all! Bring along your camera – record this once in a life time event!

Food

A limited menu of snacks will be available at the concession stands.

Southeast Runs Miles and Miles and Miles!

Thank you to the parents, staff, UCONN interns as well as the coaches and athletes from E.O. Smith who inspired students, and found inspiration in our enormously successful Southeast Running and Mileage Clubs. We enjoyed a wonderful fall season as 47 eager athletes took part in the after-school Running Club, while an equally enthusiastic group of students enjoyed their participation in recess Mileage Club.



Running began the first week of the school year and we didn't stop running until late November. Many students met a variety of individual goals and many exceeded the goals they set for themselves. Equally gratifying was witnessing students urging others on and sharing the satisfaction of their collective accomplishments. With the enjoyment we all experienced at Running Club and Mileage Club, we're sure most of them will see running as fun for everyone!

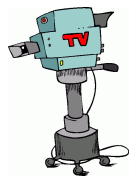
The program's success was really brought home and celebrated with a visit from the elite high school runners and coaches of the E.O. Smith Cross Country Team who ran with us at the last club meeting. They inspired the Southeast runners with their own skills, true stories of accomplishment and character. The team spirit and selfless enthusiasm of these young adult runners was a wonderful example for our student athletes.

Although Running Club and Mileage Club are done for the season, we're sure the fun we shared and the lessons we learned will last a lifetime. We'll be back together in the spring and we have exciting news regarding both Running and Mileage Clubs, and Southeast's involvement in a statewide program called *KidsRunning*.

In the meantime, thanks again to all those students, staff and parents who made this program a huge success...and tons of fun. A special thanks to Beth Gankofskie, Maureen Gagne and the kitchen staff for the healthy snack they provided every Friday at Running Club.

Green Thumbs Club Interviewed at CTV14 Studio

Five of our students and two Good Earth Interns from UCONN had the unique opportunity to be recorded at the CTV14 Studio for a show called "Education Matters." The students spoke about our very own Green Thumbs Club and how it was founded, the recycling process at our school and what happens to the sneakers, calendars, etc. that are collected, as well as the process of composting at Southeast School. The students interviewed were Brandon Koehler, Brooke Hawthorne, Sarah Sommer, Emma Powers and Katie Cranmer. Leading the group were our two Good Earth Interns from UCONN, Caitlyn Hardy and Katie DeVinney.



The show aired on CTV channel 14 on Dec. 15th, Dec. 17th, and Dec. 19th

Enrichment Clusters



Enrichment Clusters at Southeast School were a great success this fall. All K-4 students selected an enrichment cluster that they thought sounded the most interesting. Each week for four Wednesdays, students met up with other students and adults who had the same interests to spend 90 minutes learning about this topic. We all look forward to

enrichment cluster days to set aside our usual work to pursue one of our passions! Some students explored the outdoor environment and nature through *Letterboxing*, *Wildlife Wonders*, *Wilderness Survival*, *What's the Buzz*, *Nature Crafts*, and *Adventurers*. Others used their creativity in *GeoArt*, *Recycling Art*, *Woodland Fairies*, *Theater Extravaganza*, and *GeoDesigns*. There was lots of movement in *Superstar Gymnast* and *Creative Connections in the Martial Arts*. Students learned about other countries in *Bonjour, Mes Amis*, and *Explore Uzbekistan*. There was Mystery (*The Case of the Missing Beanie*), technology (*Web Warriors*), Science (*Scientific Investigators* and *Scouting Around*) and Nutrition (*Food Smarts*). The Enrichment Team would like to thank Mr. Hendricks for his technical assistance in organizing enrichment clusters. Special thanks to Amy and Scott Dunstan, Diane Hirsch, and Julie Brown along with staff members, interns and community members who helped this year.



Southeast Families Care for Our Community

Southeast sponsored five families through WAIM's "Adopt-a-Family" program. Suggestions for gifts were written on snowflakes and displayed on a bulletin board near the front door. Anyone wishing to contribute a gift took a snowflake and purchased the appropriate gift item. The outpouring of caring was unbelievable! We received a tremendous number of gifts and gift cards.

Thank you to all who donated gift items to make the holidays extra special for those less fortunate.



PTO Updates & Events:

2009 -2010 PTO OFFICERS

President.....Julie Brown
Vice President.....Andrea Lennon
Treasurer.....Kimberly Clark
Secretary.....Jennie Novick

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Thanks to Kimberly Clark for organizing the Fall Book Fair, and for all of those who staffed the table during the sale, and those who helped set up and pack up the books. Thanks to your purchases, the PTO was able to buy books for the library and the teacher's classrooms.



Thanks to Tia Willour for organizing the Thanksgiving pie sale. We made \$350! Thanks to all who donated pies, cookies, and other treats for the sale.

Thanks to Patty Jajliardo for organizing the Avon Christmas fundraiser.

Thanks to Jess Higham for recruiting Southeast families for WAIM's Walk for Warmth. The walk raised money to heat homes of families in need.

Thanks to Patty Braithwaite for being PTO volunteer for the class pictures. It was a little more of a challenge this year, because a number of students were out of school due to illness on picture day, but everything worked out.

Movie Night

Watch for announcements for Movie Night sometime in January or February. We're hoping to show a movie in the gym for free - something for families to do on a cold winter's night!



Student Directory

A list of students by classroom with addresses, phone numbers, and email will be available at the beginning of January. Each classroom will be given a copy. If you would like a copy emailed to you, please contact Kimberly Clark at kgandabc@rocketmail.com.

A Note About Fundraising

Several of our Southeast families have expressed the desire to make cash donations in lieu of participating in various fundraisers held throughout the school year. The PTO is always grateful to receive any and all donations. If making a monetary donation better serves your family, please feel free to do so. All donations go directly to the many programs and services the PTO supports. Checks and money orders can be made out to the Southeast PTO and sent in with your child or dropped off in the office. Thank you to all who have donated and participated in our fundraising efforts!

Next PTO Meeting

Our next PTO meeting will be Monday, January 4th at 7:00 pm. There will NOT be a Parents' Hour beforehand. There is free childcare (including pizza) for those who want to attend the meeting. (Please call the office to be put on the childcare list.)

Everyone is welcome!



Bus Company Phone Notification System, AlertNow



Beginning on Monday, December 14, 2009, Durham School Services, our bus company, will provide an additional service called AlertNow. AlertNow is a phone notification system designed to communicate information in the event of a bus delay.

Durham School Services has taken this step because it has been unable to provide consistent daily bus transportation for students both to and from school due to a lack of qualified drivers despite the best efforts of its Manager, Bailey Blanchard, Dispatcher, Kietha Halbach, and a group of dedicated drivers.

In the event of a notable delay, AlertNow will allow the bus company to send an automated phone call to inform you of the bus delay. **Phone calls will only be placed to the specific families with children who are assigned to the impacted bus(es).** For morning delays, the call will be placed to your home phone number, and for afternoon delays the call will be sent to your home and cell phone numbers.

The bus company will use the home and cell phone numbers that you provided to your child's school. If you have a phone number change, please call your child's school office to update school records. AlertNow will update phone numbers once per week. If you do not wish to participate in this service, simply call your school and your number will be removed from this list.

Thank you for your continued patience as Durham attempts to address the staffing issues. We appreciate your support and will continue to work with the bus company to address this issue. While we hope that we will not need to call your family with news of a bus delay, we believe this system will be helpful if this should occur.

Below we have listed answers to AlertNow FAQ's that you may find of interest. Please feel free to contact me at 860.429.3350 or email mboesupt@mansfieldct.org with any questions you may have.

Frederick A. Baruzzi, Superintendent

AlertNow Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Who will receive phone calls about bus transportation delays?

A: Calls will only be placed to the families with children who are assigned to the delayed bus. For morning delays, the call will go to the home phone number of the first and second parent, while in the afternoon it will include the home and cell numbers of the first and second parent.

Q: How do I update my home and/or cell phone number?

A: Call your child's school. Phone numbers are updated in the AlertNow system once per week.

Q: What if I do not want to receive AlertNow phone calls at a specific home or cell phone number?

A: Call the Mansfield Public Schools Central Office at 860-429-3350 and provide the specific number(s) to be added to a do-not-call list for our AlertNow system. We encourage you to consider not taking this step as we believe AlertNow is an important communication tool, but we will of course respect your request.

Q: Can I receive the phone call on other numbers?

A: Morning bus delays will only be sent to the home phone number of the first and second parent and afternoon bus delays will only be sent to the home and cell phone numbers of the first and second parent contact.

Q: What if no one answers the phone?

A: AlertNow will attempt to leave a message on the answering machine if available. If the number is busy or no machine answers, it will make 4 attempts and will wait three minutes between each attempt.

Q: What if I want to listen to the message again during the phone call?

A: At any point during the phone call you can press "1" on your phone and it will start the message again from the beginning. You can not listen to the message again once you have hung up the phone.

Q: I said "hello" and no message played. Why?

A: Errors might occur if the person repeatedly says "hello" or answers in a noisy environment as the system may pause to wait for silence if it is repeatedly interrupted. You can press "1" on your phone to force it to play.

Q: Why is my answering machine recording only a portion of the message or no message at all?

A: If the answering machine greeting is sporadic or quiet with varied periods of silence, the system might read this as a live person and begin playing the message, even though the machine has yet to start recording. The recommended solution is to re-record your answering machine message clearly and with no extended pauses.

Q: Can AlertNow enter a mailbox number or extension number?

A: Generally AlertNow is not able to do this.

Q: I have a telemarketer screening device. How will that affect the call?

A: This will usually result in a failed attempt to place the phone call.

Q: I have a phone line that is shared by a fax machine. Can I receive the calls?

A: Generally yes, but some fax machines will prevent the call from being successfully placed.

Q: Will I have problems receiving the call on my cell phone?

A: Generally no, but reception issues can cause errors, such as a delayed start or an incomplete voicemail message. Sprint and Nextel networks often have a message that says "Please hold while we locate the subscriber," which AlertNow mistakenly may think is the proper time to start playing the message.

Q: If I have two children on the same school bus, will I receive the phone call twice if their bus is delayed?

A: No, the AlertNow system will only call the phone number once.

Q: If my child only rides the bus on certain days of the week, will I only receive the phone call on those days? Similarly, if my child is absent, will I not receive the phone call?

A: The AlertNow system places the phone call for all children assigned to the school bus and can not differentiate if the child is not on the bus on a given day.